

Be Humbler Than Even A Blade Of Grass

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Published in The Harmonist (Sree Sajjanatoshani)

Part 1

The holy command of Shri Guru has been that we shall serve Godhead in association with one another. By the word 'we' he did not mean any one individual. There are many persons who are very selfish, indeed. They say, 'I alone shall serve. It is incumbent on me alone. No one else has any claim to join me in my service of Godhead.' But the kind heart of Shri Gurudeva says, 'Come, let all of us jointly worship Godhead by giving up malice.' The service of Godhead is the highest of all functions. My Gurudeva does not say that others will be unable to do the work because it happens to be the highest. Neither does he say that he will not allow any other person to serve Godhead, on the ground that it is the highest of all functions. The chant of Hari-Nama that is performed jointly by all persons is Sankirtana. 'That Kirtana which is performed by many jointly is alone Sankirtana.' Prayer, praising Godhead, is included in Sankirtana.

Puja or worship is a reverential submission performed by one in favour of another in the shape of service. The suppliant approaches the Revered with fear arising from high respect or what may be termed respectful awe expressed in his words and visible in his body and mind. Verbal adoration, corporal prostration and mental humiliation are the contributory parts of the Puja inviting good wishes of the respected being. In the Puja a higher platform is always offered to the worshipped, and generally in the act of worship, touching the lowest part of his limb (his feet), the offering of delightful encomiums and the cherishing of reverential feelings on the part of a worshipper are involved. When a respected entity can be had directly through our senses, we can render direct service to him without any intervention; but in the case of a distantly located object, we have to transmit our services through symbolized sounds, through lips and scripts only. In both the cases Puja can be conducted by a worshipper with gross articles, as well as through the subtle medium of sound and through a submissive mentality which makes the worshipper consider himself situated in a lower office as a Laghu or less weighty

being, while the Guru or heavy objects is in an upper office in comparison to himself; but the case becomes quite different, when the mundane plane is changed for the transcendental one, which has quite distinctive feature.

In this mundane plane, Puja is often performed with an eye on personal gain, when we are desirous of having something in return for our reverential act. Puja may be also conducted for the attainment of our salvation, where we want to annihilate all our desires, and even to become identical with the Object of worship, thereby attaining full impersonality; but no desire whatsoever is traceable in the actual annihilation, nor any gain sought for the Positive Entity of Godhead in the shape of service. So all these Pujas effect the merging of one's self as well as the Gurudeva, and the personality of Godhead in one neutral position where their different entities are not traceable. These sorts of temporal services should never be confused with the Eternal Servitude or Love. Nor should the Puja, raised even to the most dignified position, ever be confused with the true confidential service. So Paramarthic Puja and Paramarthic Guru are quite different from the activities of pseudo-worshippers who have some other ulterior selfish and personal motive in their acts of submission.

A real Spiritual Preceptor is defined as one who dispels the darkness of ignorance of our relative plane and opens our blind eyes by his prevailing influence. He is the one well-wisher without a second to help us to concentrate our scattered activities in the Personal Absolute. So he has no standpoint which deviates in the least from the Prime Cause of evolution, sustenance and dissolution. He is that true and perfect guide to show us the transcendental track to approach the Eternal Full-Knowledge and Incessant Bliss, as well as the undisturbed all-engrossing acme of magnitude, ignoring all sorts of gradation of relativity. His position will not permit a bona fide approacher, if the latter is not insincere and apathetic, to be a possessor of a partial entity merely, hankering after the supplying of his own personal or selfish needs by means of perishable objects, full of contamination of ignorance and of uncertain factors. His Eternal Personality is never to be ignored by means of any unethical principles which do not register a thorough affection for his disciple while

considering all the stages and aspects of his ward's progress.

The semitic ideas entertained by a section of so-called intelligent people in fixing preceptorship on as [sic] individual of a particular time and place on the basis of ultra-metempsychosis show no cogent ratiocination by which the audience could be dissuaded from accepting the undeviated position of the Personal Absolute Truth. The futility of such speculation of the Absolute position will be apparent when we consider the fluctuations of different mentalities of intransigent sects or persons wrought by unforeseen conditions which have disclosed in detail that their assertive statements are merely congenial to a particular locality and fulfill only a temporal purpose.

The deadened mentality produced by an association with insentients and less sentiments cannot be enlivened, if a wrong interpretation prevails upon them to post themselves in an incredulous position. As we are located in such a situation, all our final decisive conclusions are but products of a particular angle of vision. This hinges on associative reflex actions of [sic] fallen souls. In order to set us, fallen souls, free from this perverted position, we should crave the help of a transcendental agent who can vouchsafe our march free from the chains of those four-fold agents of irregularities. A bona fide regulator should be sought in order to obtain eternal relief from the maladies by praying to the Fountainhead.

The Prime Cause of all effects should not be mutilated or manufactured through the agency of our unblossomed prerogatives. We are limited entities, but the Unlimited Infinity minus our infinitesimality would give us, as a result, an almost infinite gulf. We are earnestly called upon to search for and establish a tie between us and the Unlimited Entity. And in fact the Agent of that tie is neither an obstacle to the harmony nor a contending entity, but the most kind-hearted personality. We cannot expect to tide over difficulties or pitfalls in our crossing the ocean of Samsara, by catching the tails of puppies as we say colloquially, that is by depending on the supply of our mundane desires. We are no doubt eligible to receive mercy from the All Merciful, when we in our prayer show a clean heart, free from all encumbrances of selfish or personal desires, and cultivate the spirit of unconditional surrender.

Our own personality should not incorporate any outside material to obstruct the full vision of the Personal Absolute, but can seek regulation from the Personality of the Absolute Who is always willing to disclose His own Person when we are actually not prone to be overpowered by anything in our communion with Him. The Absolute will no doubt send an agent to communicate His Personality to our unalloyed personality, thought it may be susceptible to foreign invasions.

This Transcendental mediator or Shri Guru Deva is a loving Agent of the All-love, and so will be kind to us who are seeking for a tie of love with the All-love. This Embodiment of Love will gradually lead our loving mood to that One Who is the Fountainhead and mainstay of all aspects of eternal Love. This messenger is the pioneer leader of Love, the courier of the All-love, the establisher of all relations of Divine love and the regulator and modifier of all our non-loving principles. If we ignore this fundamental principle we will be taking too much responsibility on ourselves.

The Harmonising Energy of the All-love can shower His blessings personally or through his Agents. Our perception of numerous units in this misguided world has given rise to a desire to lord it over others but that act itself is the result of a wrong perspective which engenders apathy towards concentrating our unconditional activities in and for the All-love. If we have a devotional attitude towards the Preceptor, we are sure to get at our Final Goal through him who liberates us by changing our wrong mentality by two processes.

The Deluding Energy of the All-love that is fully opposed to our eternal interest of love towards the Absolute shows a pair of pincers or shafts in order to grip us in her clutches, viz., that of dislocating and that of enwrapping his disciples by means of his kind but sure treatment. So the sincere activities of the Spiritual Guru always tend to give permanent relief to his disciples from those two-fold clutches of maya which have given rise to the worldly measuring mood of disciples. The Guru aims at extending their knowledge of the Absolute and removing the foreign obstacles of double layers of dirt that cover them.

A mere flatterer's role of lulling and encouraging the wrong aptitudes of a

disciple should never be aimed at in the selection of a real and true Guru. A submissive temper with unconditional surrender on the part of a disciple to the All-love will invoke His mercy and He will condescend to fulfill our prayer. The cogent but loving potency of the All-love will then be operating on us to pacify the turmoil arising out of our baneful activities. The Preceptor will never let us fall into the extensive snare of maya as he has no ulterior motive to dissuade us from having a sure access to the Transcendental treasures. He will show us for our inspection or examination a comparative chart of the magnitude of time, space and entity. When we submit to measurement, we see no necessity of any outside help; but when we consider him to be our most intimate friend coming down to us out of causeless mercy, and at the same time to be the bona fide and sure healer of our present maladies we find that he is identical in his activities with the All-love and that he is not only superior to us in every respect but he ever remains in the same direction with Godhead possessed of a transparent pure entity to approach the Absolute; whereas, other so-called preceptors have always an impure opacity, with which they impede our impressions of the Eternity, Full Knowledge and Incessant Bliss of the All-love.

Our own eternal function is to associate ourselves with the Eternal, to sever our connection with everything temporal, to engage ourselves in All-Knowledge, to dispel all darkness of ignorance as well as to develop and progress with our inherent enthusiasm for the transcendental.

I myself have individual business with the Integral All-love. I do not require any second person (you) who have got some other position than my Object, viz., the All-love. I need not trouble myself with the company of 'him' who has no true kindness to me or who has no whole-hearted love for the All-love. So the Personality has a singular significance quite distinct from such Impersonation as we have here, owing to our apathy to the Personality of Godhead, which is improper in itself and which is, in other words, a contamination with incompatible concomitants. I myself should not be polluted by that discord which is always found in the plurality of this miserable manifestation, but I have every inclination to make my friends quite compatible with the All-love, provided you or they count me as one of you or them. I will then be in a position to accept

comradeship in that plurality, as all of us shall there have one aim and object and no conflicting discord due to our mutual rivalries. I will be all the more pleased if I find that another competes in my line to serve my All-love in a better way perhaps than I can. This lower gradation of myself will not harm or prejudice me in the least, but will develop and augment the cause of my unalloyed devotion to and love for Him; I will rather regulate and conciliate my wrong elements harmoniously and count my co-sharer's singular service in the proper light of my Guru. My co-sharer, by rendering closer service to the All-love from than my humble devotion, must needs draw more love from my Guru, and on my part I should please my Guru by not interfering with the greater facility of closer service rendered by my co-sharer. My friends who have greater aptitude of love for the All-love Krishna would not then despise me, but will kindly count me as their humble friend by graciously allowing me to be blessed with an unalloyed devotion to and love for my own Guru who is identically the same with the Predominated Counter-Whole of the Predominating Aspect of the All-love. I will 'therefore' never be hostile and apathetic to those who have a tendency to be devoted to the All-love, but I will reckon them as confidential members whom I should serve with all intimacy and love for their close services to Him in a plane where I have also got a humble position.

Here are the words spoken by Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Himself: 'It is necessary to be humbler than a blade of grass if one is really anxious to take the Name of Godhead.' One never supplicates another unless one realizes his own littleness. When we pray for the help of other persons we consider ourselves helpless. A certain work cannot be done by myself; it is, therefore, necessary to take the help of others, if I want to do the work at all. Any work that can be done only by five persons acting together is not possible to be performed by one's own un-aided efforts. Shri Gaursundar has told us to take the Name of Godhead. These tidings flow to us from the lotus feet of Shri Gurudeva. Shri Gaursundar has told us to call upon the Name of Godhead, which means that he also told us to be humbler than a blade of grass when we call upon the Name of Godhead. If we call upon Godhead for converting Him into our servant or want to take His help for doing any work on our own account we cannot preserve the quality of humility greater than that of the blade of grass.

External exhibition of humility is not that quality of lowliness which makes one humbler than the blade of grass. Mere show of humility is nothing but insincerity or hypocrisy. That manner of calling which is responded to by one's subordinate does not reach Godhead. Because He is the Supreme Independent, Perfect, Self-conscious Entity Who is subject to none. It is necessary to fully establish one's individuality in the state of guileless humility. If this is not done one's prayer does not reach the Perfect Autocrat.

There is another condition. It is necessary to fall upon Godhead by being humbler than a blade of grass. It is also necessary at the same time to be possessed of the quality of patience. If we are not patient we cannot call upon Godhead in the manner that will reach Him. We become impatient whenever we covet anything. Covetousness is the opposite of humility. We must fully believe in Godhead. We must believe in His Plenitude. We can have no wants if we call upon Him. If we have this perfect faith we cannot be wanting in patience. On the other hand if we are covetous if we are betrayed into inconstancy by our impatience, if we secretly cherish any plan of gaining our object by means of any ability or merit of our own, then we are no longer in the condition to call upon Godhead. Prayer to Godhead is also impossible if on the contrary one is occupied with the attempt merely to destroy one's self-conceit.

On many occasions we suppose that it is due to our own innate kindness that we at all pray to Godhead or recite His praises, that it is open to us to be engaged in any other work without calling upon Godhead as a matter of necessity. Such judgment is also indicative of want of patience. It is necessary to have a Protector to save us from such inclination of the mind. It is necessary to have a Protector to save us from being deprived of the quality of guileless humility greater than that of a blade of grass'. It is necessary to have a Refuge for being saved from such evil tendency. Thakur Narottam has said, 'He who serves after obtaining protection is never abandoned by Krishna. All the rest die needlessly.'

It is first of all necessary to sit at the lotus-feet of Shri Guru and obey his commands. It is recognised as necessary to have to submit to a teacher to obtain capacity for work, knowledge or the fulfillment of any desires other than Krishna that are available in this world. But the knowledge that

those teachers give produces only a variety of small results. But the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva who teaches about the highest good, do not give trivial fruits like the above. The lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva provide for our real good. The moment there is cessation for the mercy of Shri Gurudeva, diverse evil desires are bound to make their appearance in the world. It is necessary to have the constant help of the spiritual teacher to show us the way. It is necessary to be constantly advised regarding the method of seeking the protection of the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva, to be instructed about the mode in which to deal with the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva. If the spiritual teacher does not constantly teach us all these matters we are bound to lose in no time even the treasure that we might receive.

The service of the Holy Name is undoubtedly the only method by which we can really serve Godhead. It is Shri Gurudeva Who bestows on us the gift of this method of service. It, therefore, stands to reason that it should be our duty, above every other thing, to worship the lotus-feet of Shri Guru at the beginning of the new year. In the Bhakti Rasamritasindhu Shri Rupa Goswami Prabhu has said, 'Accepting the protection of the feet of Shri Guru is, therefore, the first duty. The next duty is to learn from him about Krishna by the processes of sikshaa, etc. Then follows the duty of serving Shri Guru on a footing of intimacy. This is the path that is followed by the Sadhus. It is our duty to follow their example.'

It is possible for a person to possess a great variety of abilities. It is not possible to make any progress in a realm that is wholly un-known, or which has to be known with great difficulty, by means of any ability however great which we may happen to possess. As an example we may take the case of those future worlds which are kept out of our view or the entity that is known as the future. It is not possible by our own efforts to make any progress in the knowledge of these matters. The mode of judgment that is applicable to this world is not able to lead us into the realm that is only intelligible to transcendental judgment. In regard to all those periods that are past we have obtained knowledge born of the senses. But we have no knowledge regarding to-morrow. Our eyes can see only to a distance of one or two miles. Our ears can catch the sound from a limited distance only. By means of knowledge that is accessible to

such senses we cannot know anything about the transcendental Realm which is full of all perfection. If we try to advance into such a Realm by no other method than our own ability we can never reach the goal. The demon Ravana tried to build steps by means of which it might be possible for all persons to reach heaven without difficulty. But this structure could not be completed. It tumbled down after it had been constructed to a certain height, for want of support. Nothing can remain for any length of time in the open space without any support. It is bound to break to pieces and fall down. If we try to ascend into the unknowable realm by depending on the stock of our own ability we only tumble down by such effort. We also fall down if we choose to fancy what is trivial or light to be of much consequence or weighty.

It is our duty to judge as to who is Guru and who is of no consequence (laghu). He alone is Guru who serves that complete substantive Entity Who is the only Object of worship of all persons of any consequence (Gurus). I am not speaking of those Gurus who teach the sitar or the art of wrestling. Such Gurus cannot save us from death. We find in one of the Shlokas of the Bhagavatam that 'That Guru is no Guru, that father is no father, that mother is no mother, that devata (god) is no devata, that kinsman is no kinsman, who cannot save us from the jaws of death, who cannot give us the eternal life, who cannot save us from the ignorance of death in the shape of addiction to this material world.

We fall into the jaws of death certainly by reason of our ignorance. We do not fall into the jaws of death by reason of wisdom. We gain a certain kind of knowledge in this world. But that knowledge is of no avail if we become made, or are stricken with paralysis or after we are dead. If we do not seek the real truth we lose the power of knowing. He who cannot rescue us from the jaws of death can only delude us for a certain number of days. He who tempts us by the sensuous impulses of his words, hands, feet, anus and the organ of generation is a cheat. But Shri Gurudeva has power to save us from all deception. It is, therefore, certainly our duty to worship only the lotus-feet of Shri Guru Deva who is so merciful, at the beginning of every year, at the beginning of every month, at the beginning of every day and even at the beginning of every moment, of our lives.

It is my Gurudeva who is graciously present in all the different forms. If he is not graciously present in all these different forms who would then preserve me? Those whom my Gurudeva had made his own are my saviours. But may I never have occasion to see the face of that wicked person who is a source of evil, who maligns the lotus-feet of my Shri Gurudeva or who countenances in any way such a slanderer.

The moment I fall away from the lotus-feet of Shri Guru or forget them, I certainly fall away from the Truth. As soon as I fall away from the lotus-feet of Shri Guru I find myself encompassed by innumerable wants. I run in a hurry for my bath. I become busy for preventing a cold. I run after other occupations different from the service of Shri Gurudeva. It is the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva that alone protect me constantly from all this attachment for objects other than the Truth. If I do not remember the lotus-feet of Shri Guru at the beginning of every new year, every new month, every new day and every new moment, then I am sure to fall into far greater inconveniences. If I do not do so I want to dress myself in the garb of the Guru. I become liable to the bad desire of seeking to be worshipped by other people as Guru. It is this which constitutes addition to other things than the Truth.

Gaurasundar is directly the same Entity as Krishna. He has appeared here as the world-Teacher. He conveyed His teachings in eight stanzas of verse. The Mahanta-Guru and all the other Vaishnavas who are submissively attached to the Mahanta-Guru instruct me in every way in those teachings of Shri Gaurasundar. All the other Vaishnavas who are submissively attached to the Mahanta-Guru, save me from all dangers.

The order of the Gurus who have in their nature the protecting power of the Divinity, are always present in different forms and figures to bestow their mercies on me. All of them are specific manifestations of Shri Guru who confers spiritual knowledge.

Krishna as Object of worship is one-Half, and, as the Support of His worshipper, He Himself is the other Half of the Whole. The variety of reciprocal activity of these Two Moieties constitutes the Fullness of the Divinity. Krishna is the complete realization of the Support of His worship. The transcendental reflections which are also of the nature of supporters

are the worship of the Divinity, which appear in the different planes of cognitive existences, are my Gurudeva in His different forms. He who is constantly showing us how to serve Godhead, throughout life, is no other than our Shri Gurudeva. Shri Gurudeva is present in every object as the supporting principle. He is graciously present in every object. 'All ye trees that be resident on the bank of the Yamuna for benefiting others, Chuta, Priyala, Pnasa, Asana, Kobidara, Jambu, Arka, Bilwa, Bakula, Amra, Kadamba, Neepea and others, tell us the way by which Shri Krishna has been seen by you to pass. Our hearts are bereft of all their contents and are feeling very lonely, by separation from Krishna.' [1]

Krishna has gone away from the place of the Rasa-dance. The Gopis, who are un-fettered souls, are seeking for Krishna by approaching every object. Was the external sense-perception of the Gopis then very strong? Was their sensuous knowledge then very powerful? There comes an occasion to hear about all these matters if we just fall at the lotus-feet of our Shri Gurudeva. Nanda-Govinda, Yasoda-Govinda, Shridama-Govinda, Chiraka-Patraka-Govinda, Bansi-Govinda, Go-Govinda, Kadamba-Govinda, etc., are the various Pastimes of the pure cognitive principle. They are the Pastimes of the Shri Radha-Govinda replete with all Rasas. If one obtains the blessed sight of the lotus-feet of Shri Guru in his heart it is only then that the true nature of these words manifests itself. It is Shri Guru who enlightens us in every matter to enable us to worship Godhead. There is no other way of obtaining the service of the absolute Integer except by the method of the worship of Shri Guru.

We have had occasions enough to hear many sweet words expressive of constancy. May we show such constancy to the lotus-feet of Shri Guru! The reflected form of the lotus-feet of Shri Guru in different receptacles constantly reveals many new matters for our instruction. I am a little jiva, full of arrogance. Why then am I enabled to hear such words of constancy? The lotus-feet of Shri Guru have afforded me this opportunity of hearing all those words expressive of constancy. In this manner he is telling me every moment, 'O you little soul, do you show such constancy to the lotus-feet of Shri Guru.' As I observe the disposition to serve Godhead of the reflected forms of the lotus-feet of my Shri Guru in different receptacles, I pray that I may be born crores of times in order to

practise the service of Hari in their company, that my aversion to the service of Godhead that has accumulated during crores of births may be dispelled by their companionship.

I once went to Mangalgiri in the Southern part of the country for installation of the Shrine of the Foot-Prints of Mahaprabhu. At that time certain persons from among ourselves put this question while we were still at Mangalgiri. "When we first came to the Math we felt great hope and enthusiasm by noticing the character and love of the service of Godhead of our friends. Now-a-days our out-look is being gradually stunted. We have begun to think in different ways. Several Brahmacharis have turned house-holders by accepting the method of Samavartan.' In answer to this I said, 'I am unable to say that it becomes necessary to give up the service of Hari if one becomes a house-holder. On my part I see round about us many wonderful Vaishnavas. I find that their Vaishnavism, devotion to Hari, has grown a good deal more. What a great pasanda I was! How greatly my impiety has diminished by associating with them! I find that, although I am averse to Godhead, they are all serving Hari. I have been enabled to know by the mercy of the lotus-feet of Shri Raghunath Bhatta Goswami Prabhu that he never lent his ears to listen to the tidings of condemnable actions of the Vaishnavas and that it sufficed for him to know only this much, that all serve Krishna.'

I find that every one is serving Hari by making progress on the path of devotion. The house-hold of Godhead has prospered in every way. Only no benefit has accrued to me. All have been undoubtedly benefited. You have become agitated by small insufficiencies. Your anxiety for serving Godhead is very great. It is for this reason that you want that they should serve Hari in still greater measure. You are unable to feel satisfied even when you find them in the very act of serving Hari. You want that they should serve the Lord of your life with a billion-fold greater devotion. But my heart is a little one, my vessel is small. It is for this reason that I am unable to contain their great service of Hari in my small vessel. Their endeavour for the service of Hari is over-flowing my little cup. I feel it impossible any longer to keep squeezed within the limits of my small vessel the vastness of their service of Hari. They are fast passing away setting an example of the most wonderfully ideal life of service. I alone

am unable to serve Hari. I alone am busy to detect the defects of others. I ought to have progressed on the path of service. But I have chosen to be busy in searching for the defects of Vaishnavas instead.

Who are those that try to find the draw-backs of the Vaishnavas? They are the community of empiricists whose only resource consists of the eye, ear, nose, etc., deluded by external objects, in short, all those who are averse to the service of Hari. When anyone tells me that a particular person has given up chanting the Name of Hari I think in my mind that the service of Hari of such a person must have certainly increased to an extraordinary extent, that his heart must have been very much improved and that it is for this reason he has been enabled to be engaged in other work by giving up the service of Hari which is the only path to well-being. He has grown immensely wealthy. He has been satisfied and, therefore, does not want to undergo the trouble of earning more riches.

Shri Bhagavan has said in the Gita that no harm can ever befall the devotees of Godhead, that they can never die, "My devotee is not destroyed". 'Even if one whose habits of life are highly condemnable serve Me with a singleness of purpose, he should certainly be considered as righteous. His conduct is surely altogether perfect. He becomes virtuous in no time and quickly attains the eternal peace of the soul. Son of Kunti, do thou know for certain that My devotee never comes to grief. [2]

Can those who serve with a singleness of heart ever fall away from devotion? They have certainly gained the state of well-being. My eyesight is bad. It is for this reason that I am unable to obtain my own good. 'Never either praise or condemn the character and activity of other persons seeing that the whole world is one by its proper nature, by mutual union of Prakriti and Purusha, the Support and the Object of worship'.

If I turn an empiricist I am deprived of the service of the transcendental, the service of Shri Guru. It is when evil overtakes myself, and by reason of being in such evil plight, that I am put in mind of the misfortunes of other persons. It is because I am myself honeycombed by a thousand defects that I am attracted by the task of seeking for the defects of other

persons. If I am in a position to secure my own good I have no longer leisure for finding the faults, the misfortunes of other people. 'If any person, after being initiated at the lotus-feet of the Sad-Guru, chant the Name of Krishna it is our duty to entertain for him high esteem in our hearts. If such a person being even intent on devotion to Shri Hari serve the holy Name on the spiritual plane it is our duty in every way to honour him by means of obeisance and other marks of submission. The best of devotees, the Maha-bhagavata, is possessed of exclusive reliance on Krishna. Being devoid of any other consciousness excepting that of Krishna the heart of such a person is free from any discordant mood leading to slander or malice against any person. The Maha-Bhagavata is thoroughly versed in the process of intimate spiritual service of Godhead. One who has made considerable progress on the path of spiritual service is alone in a position to recognize that the Maha-bhagavata is the best of friends with whom it is possible to cultivate the closest relationship as he never feels disturbed by the claims of intimate relationship of the nature that should subsist between pure souls. If we are fortunate enough to realise the supreme excellence of the Maha-Bhagavata we should be able to recognise that it is our duty to express our loving regard for such a person by the methods of obedience, sincere inquiries regarding the Truth and rendering loyal service.

This life is of short duration. Even in that short space we are continuously and actively engaged in this realm of Devi in the enjoyment of the objects of this world and for the purpose of seeking out the defects of other people and becoming thereby a supreme example of the utter absence of the quality of humility greater than that of the blade of grass.

At the lotus-feet of Shri Guru there is no search for the defects of other people. Yet there is no other function of submission at the lotus-feet of Shri Guru than to be constantly made aware of my hundreds of thousands of defects and to be cautioned constantly against any evil that is likely to befall me. May we not be deprived of the ideal of sitting at the lotus-feet of Shri Guru. I will give up criticizing other people. 'I am very clever. I am very learned, very intelligent. I am a great speaker. That person is illiterate, and foolish, and cannot properly talk about anything': such talk is out of place. If we try to diminish the practice of discussing

the defects of other people in this manner, and discourse only about Hari, instead, I think it would do us good.

Shri Guru is the predominated moiety of the son of the Chief of Braja Who is indivisible knowledge. Krishnachandra Himself in the role of Shri Guru is engaged in Beholding Himself as the Object of contemplation by seeking His own support. I am also under the protection of Shri Krishna, being incorporated with the lotus-feet of Shri Guru. "I have recently passed a brief spell of time on the wings of hope, which has, indeed, been like an Ocean of nectar. If you do not vouchsafe your mercy to me I certainly have nothing to do by living. O Possessor of the Form most pleasing to Krishna what are life, Braja and even the Slayer of Baka Himself to me if I am devoid of your mercy?"

I have been asked sometimes by different persons why we do not give away the realized method of service to all persons. As for myself I cannot understand how the condition of self-realised souls and that of novices may be supposed to be identical. It passes our judgment to understand how the service and realization of souls free from all defects can be practised during the period of novitiate which is full of many defects. If any person happens to belong to the order of self-realised souls he may kindly intimate to me the fact. I can then know about the specific nature of his realized self.

Shri Gurudeva is the daughter of Brishabhanu (Shri Radha) in the Madhura-rasa (Spiritual quality of sweetness of Divine amour). There are different ways in which different persons, whose faculty of spiritual consciousness has been aroused, judge about their own requirements. Every enlightened person is privileged to have a sign of Shri Gurudeva in accordance with his particular mode of judgment. Shri Gurudeva is that real Entity who thus reveals himself to the view of enlightened souls in a variety of ways. Realised by the method of the Rasa of parental affection Shri Gurudeva reveals himself as Nanda-Yasoda. In the Rasa of friendly affection he is Shridama-Sudama. In the Rasa of the devotion of servants to the master the lotus-feet of Shri Guru act as Chitraka-Patraka. The consideration of all these Aashrayas of the Vishaya rises in the heart as one progresses in the service of Shri Guru. These subjects do not manifest themselves in the course of any artificial process. They are

aroused spontaneously in the consciousness of fortunate souls on the appearance of the disposition for spiritual service of the Divinity. We have no other function than the service of Shri Guru. By means of the adulterated consciousness of the material world it is not possible to discuss the eternal Pastimes of Godhead that are inaccessible even to Shesha, Shiva, Brahma, and their peers.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Bh. X.30.9.

[2] Gita IX.30-31.

Part 2

By Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur

Published in The Harmonist (Sree Sajjanatoshani)

Shrila Vyasadeva enjoins on us ‘to meditate upon the Absolute Truth Who always dispels all delusion by His Own Potent Effulgence’. When we follow in the footsteps of Shri Vyasadeva we attain the sight of the Divine Entity. The word ‘Dhama’ means ‘light’ or ‘receptacle’. By the help of light darkness is dissipated: or if the proper receptacle is realized we are endowed with the eligibility for the performance of meditation. Our faculty of recollection which has almost faded out of memory is resuscitated.

“Non-forgetfulness of the Twin Lotus-Feet of Shri Krishna reduces non-good and augments positive well-being, by promoting purifications of the entity, devotion to the Supreme Soul, and Knowledge endowed with apprehension of the reality and non-hankering for the mundane”. It is only if we are in a position to keep that entity of the Supreme Soul constantly remembered in the heart that well-being would ensue. Hearing is rendered possible by the agency of chanting (Kirtana); and if hearing is maintained in the best manner real well-being makes its appearance. In the absence of hearing and chanting (Shravana and Kirtana) the substantive manifestation is not possible.

He alone is the Guru in the order of the spiritual successors of Shri Vyasa, by listening to whose chanting our recollection of the Divinity has been actually awakened. All of us are his servants. The desire to chant has been aroused by the practice of listening. By the agency of Kirtana, or singing, the conditioned aptitude is dispelled. If the word of that country, that unlimited Realm (Vaikuntha), the region that transcends the sphere of the measuring aptitude, reaches our ears, where word is song, on listening to that song our eternal well-being manifests itself by the

elimination of all evil.

'Vaikuntha, or Aprakrita Sabda' may be rendered as 'transcendental Sound'. The word 'transcendent' signifies 'ascending beyond everything' and in our context it means ascent beyond the conditioned aptitude. To remain here is equivalent to be confined to the mundane experience, to practise one's masculine egotism or one's vanity of being the master. But there can be no real well-being if one remains entangled in such dominating egotism, [sic] for the reason that it is only those persons who are infatuated by the sense of their own superiority that are apt to be entrapped in the fetters of such dominating egotism. "The person whose soul is infatuated by dominating egotism regards himself as his own master". This is the testimony of the Gita and all Shruti. "The individual soul perching on the same tree (as the Divinity) undergoes miseries due to his non-Divinity and infatuation. When in the act of serving he perceives [sic] his companion to be the Divinity he realizes His Glory, being delivered from sorrow". When the perceiving entity has sight of the master, the Supreme Lord, the Person Who is the Cause of the Brahman, of Golden Hue, he is completely cleansed of his virtues and vices, and freed from the obstruction of mundanity and obtaining real enlightenment, attains to the condition of supreme equipoise". This supreme equipoise is altogether different from the position of equality that is postulated by our sense-ridden judgment. The equality that relates itself to limited entities is not absolute. The equipoise relative to the Great One is a different entity.

There is mention of one's meeting with the Person with the Golden Hue and of sin and righteousness. But is it only when we are relieved from all these conditions that we are in a position to know that we are not non-spiritual entities, nor is it the function of our real nature to remain engrossed in the non-spiritual entity. So long as we remain entangled in our perverted self, by going off the track of our soul, it is not possible for us to meditate on the true Object of our meditations. The practice of meditation on limited entities has reduced us to the condition of the frog in the well.

I happen to be an entity dominated by the knowledge of the five mundane categories. I am entrapped in the functions of littleness by abstaining from thoughts of the Great One. And it is for the reason that I have

preferred to remain confined to the functions of my littleness that the egotistic sentiment, that I am the master of myself and of all entities, has appeared in me. It has become necessary to get rid of this desire for domination. Nothing is easier than to assert that the little should aim at being identified with the Great. If one allows oneself to be mastered by such senseless ambition and tries to realize his 'Oneness' with the Divinity, such egotistic vanity effectively blocks the course of all real well-being. When we are cast into the state of evil by harbouring the hallucination that we are the equals of the Divinity, there appear simultaneously, (1) a condition which is experienced as full of grief, (2) the State of infatuation due to 'forgetfulness' of our real nature and (3) fear. In other words we lament on account of supposing ourselves to be identical with our gross and subtle bodies, being enchanted by the limiting-Energy maya of Godhead. The mischief makes its appearance when I begin dishonestly to think that Godhead, His devotees (Vaishnavas), the spiritual guide and I myself are on a footing of equality, and that I am even superior to them. From the wicked thought that I am the equal of the spiritual guide and the true Devotees, or that they are less than myself, the dreadful offence in the shape of contempt for one's superiors gathers strength. This is real culpable arrogance as is clear from the text of the Bhagavatam which says: "One who, while worshipping Govinda, abstains on principle from worshipping His devotees, is called arrogant." [1] When the conviction that all Bhagavatas are objects of my worship as much as Godhead Himself, dawns upon our souls, we are freed from the clutches of grief, infatuation and fear. The only method by which this desideratum is realizable is the service of Godhead.

It is this very principle that has been sung by Shri Vyasadeva in Shrimad Bhagavatam: "By listening to the Narrative of the Bhagavatam with submission the aptitude of the service of the Supreme Divine Person Shri Krishna is aroused in such hearer. This serving disposition dissipates all sorrow, infatuation and fear". [2] It is solely because we have lost the service of the Lotus Feet of Krishna that we are subject to sorrow, infatuation and fear. In the verse, "The knowing one' wrote this thesaurus of the principles of devotion of which mankind is so ignorant," Shri Vyasadeva has been styled as the 'knowing one.' In other words all the

rest have been declared to be ignorant: I am ignorant. Why did I offer myself to the temptation of wielding domination? I am by no means the master. On the contrary I am, indeed, the slave of sorrow, infatuation and fear.

I am eligible for reading merely the Mahabharata. "Let these worship the Shruti, those the Smriti, others the Mahabharata, through fear of the sorrows of this mundane existence. Here am I engaged in the act of worshipping Nanda in the corridors of whose mansion the Supreme Lord sports as his darling Son." [3] Hear is the error. I never thought that Nanda Maharaj occupies the place of my Shri Guru, because I am so busy in contriving the destruction of Krishna. Had it not been for this why am I in my present plight? All through the period during which we continue to be anti-devotees, we are overtaken by a good many calamities. The only way for being relieved of those evils is 'Bhakti' or to serve Godhead by the natural aptitude of the soul. It is this which the truly wise Vyasadeva was enabled to know. "In the mind rendered perfectly pure and concentrated by the cementing process of transcendental service he experienced the vision of the Full Divine Personality and also of the limiting deluding potency, occupying a condemned position of dependence on Him, by whom completely infatuated the individual soul regards his essence as made up of the triple mundane qualities although his nature is really transcendental, and is addled with all those unnecessary and harmful requirements that are the products of the mundane energy. He had also a vision of the nature of the direct service of the Transcendent by means of which these needless difficulties cease automatically." [4]

We shall be enabled to realize our lasting good if only we place ourselves wholly under the protecting guidance of Shri Vyasadeva. Note particularly the verse of the Upanishad that tells of the vision of the Divine Master, "Of Golden Hue" (Yada pashya pashyate rakmavarnam etc.) [5] It will redound to our lasting good if we learn to view that entity by the joining process of transcendental service, to employ our thoughts on Him and seek to attain the Knowledge of That Unlimited Entity, in loyal pursuance of the teaching of Shri Vyasa. In the act of listening to the discourse of the Transcendental Entity the faculty of hearing will expand and acquire

new powers.

The Transcendental Word chanted by Devarshi Narada made his way into the cavity of the ear of Shri Vyasadeva. That is the cause by which he was enabled to have the vision of the Full Personality. Under the influence of the domineering aptitude that prevails in this mundane world we adopt the cults of Hero-worship and Apotheosis on the one hand or turn into Anthropomorphists, Zoomorphists, etc., on the other, by being infected with those respective modes of thought. Godhead will appear to us in the ways in which we shall choose to embellish Him.

If we abuse the prerogative of our human life, if we choose to think ourselves to be on a footing of equality with Krishna, we shall thereby fall into the snares of delusion and be consigned to perdition. The sequel of the vanity of supposing oneself to be master in one's own right has been analysed by Shri Vyasadeva in the verses beginning with "Yehnye-aravindaksha" [6] "Jnam-pmyasam" [7] "Shreya sritim," [8] , and we are truly benefited by listening attentively to those discourses of Shri Vyasadeva.

"Godhead in no long time enters the heart of the person who constantly listens with faith and chants about His Deeds." Our real good is assured if we have the good fortune of listening to the Word of Godhead at the lotus-feet of the Guru. The divine master constantly chants the Word of Godhead. He has no other function. It is imperatively necessary to listen to and accept the word chanted by him. We cannot retain the word issuing from the Lotus Lips of Shri Guru even after we have been enabled to receive Him. The word tends to be eclipsed if he is not chanted to others. If we busy ourselves in any other unnecessary pursuit by abstaining from chanting the Word received from Shri Gurudeva, we lose our eternal entity and render ourselves fit for welcoming sorrow.

'That person is entitled to the attainment of the service of the Feet of Godhead, the Redeemer from worldly bondage, who lives by submitting to Him with heart, speech and body, realizing from His good vision, His Mercy in the sufferings entailed by one's own deeds." [9] This Shloka occurs in the Bhagavatam.

There is no other way of being delivered from this world. Whatever Godhead does [sic] is for our good. We can be redeemed if we behold His Mercy in every event and in every activity. But if we notice any defect in His works or realize any cruelty [sic] therein, it is sure to result in evil and difficulty.

All my difficulty is due to the fact that I happen to be engrossed in activities other than the service of Krishna. If my taste for the service of Krishna really increases day by day I shall be blessed indeed. He who employs us in activities of this nature is indeed Shri Gurudeva. The order of the Gurus consists only of persons who are loyal followers of Shri Vyasadeva.

On receiving just a touch of the lotus-feet of my Shri Gurudeva I lost all sense of this external world. I do not know whether any transcendental agent equal to him in greatness has ever appeared in this world. How may those, who are busy with the lust, anger, etc. of the world, ever know him?

We should listen to nothing but the praises of the divine master. I have to conduct myself with all humility, in any manner that the order of my masters may at any moment consider to be needful for me. I am not prepared to take the responsibility upon myself for any inconveniences that may result from such conduct.

I have heard from my divine master that one should give audience to the Word of God by being infinitely more humble than a blade of grass. The sweet chant of the Word proceeds from the lotus-feet of the Divine master. Harkening to the chanted Word is the disciple's function. The Word is mirrored in the heart by the only method of giving audience to the chant of the divine master. Therefore, I am eligible to listen to those words of praise by the discipular method. There is a great necessity to learn by the method of listening how one should approach God and His devotees with humility, in what manner one must sing their praise and honour them.

I have found much that everyone should note most carefully. There has been an opportunity for learning how one should honour other persons,

being oneself unhonoured, how one should sing the praises of God and His devotees by silencing the hostile elements of all kinds of indolence. Singing the praises of the devotees of God, is indeed the one thing needful. My revered masters have taught us to praise God and His devotees. By praising the non-devotees both the offerers and the recipients of such praise are put to difficulties. My revered masters are endeavouring to purify my heart by teaching me to be humble. They are saying to me, 'We possess the priceless quality of honouring other persons. We are offering you all this honour that you may be similarly honouring all persons of this world, be enabled to be constantly engaged in the service of God and His devotees who can be perfectly served only by those who are inspired with such burning love'.

God and His devotees are worshipped by chanting their praises. It enables us to learn the language of Vandana or worship by the method of praise. We have also heard the following words which were spoken by our former masters, 'I am incomparably more vile than insects bred in ordure and infinitely more wicked than Jagai and Madhai'.

On a certain day, at the Dashasvamedha ghat at Prayag, Shri Rupa Goswami Prabhu worshipped the Feet of Shri Gaursundar with this Shloka, "O Krishna, I make obeisance to Thee. Thy Name is Shri Krishna- Chaitanya. Thy colour is yellow. Thy quality is great magnanimity. Thy action is the bestowal of love for Krishna. Even such is Krishna, to Whom I make my obeisance'. The hearer is Shri Chaitanyadeva, Who is the very emblem of humility. The speaker is Shri Rupa Goswami, who is a worthy person. A third person, who is arrogant like myself, happens also hear the above. What should be the natural reaction of one who witnesses such an enigmatic situation?

If anybody coming up to Chaitanyadeva happened to say 'You are the Son of the Lord of Braja', He at once used to put His hands to His ears and protest - "Krishna should be called Krishna; I am a tiny jiva; you should not call Me Krishna." By whom alone is the chanting of the Kirtana of Hari possible? By him in whom are found the four great qualities, (1) Extreme lowliness greater than that of a blade of grass is the first. Grass is trodden upon by cows, asses, men, by everyone. One should feel, 'I am humbler than such grass.' It would be well if all the vain people of the

world knew unreservedly that they are very much lower than the blade of grass; their mouths would then be enabled to utter the Name of Krishna. He who utters the Name of Krishna is most fortunate. [10] O King, those who are whole-hearted devotees that have attained freedom from desires of this world, those who covet paradise, salvation etc. and those who are realized yogis, for all without exception the repeated hearing, chanting and recollecting of the qualities of the Name of Hari, these three methods, have been laid down by former Acharyas as the highest spiritual method as well as object'. (2) Another quality of the chanter or preacher of God's word is utmost patience; (3) the third quality is want of desire for fame or honour for oneself. The preacher is without pride, without vanity. He has no worldly ambitions. (4) The fourth quality is readiness to give due honour to others. Shri Chaitanyadeva should be considered the ideal possessor of all humility, and yet it is this Shri Chaitanyadeva Who is the Teacher of the greatest humility, who was found listening to the above praise from the lips of Shri Rupa. Why?

All intelligent persons, have agreed upon the four objects of human life mentioned in the Shastras as being the very best that man can desire. Even those four objects are fit to be scorned by the love for Krishna which has been called the fifth object of Life - "You are the Giver of that love for Krishna which is the highest object of life and which can afford to condemn [sic] the four objects most desired by mankind. You are Krishna Himself. Being Yourself Krishna You are also the bestower of the love for Krishna. You bear the Name of Krishna-Chaitanya (the conscious principle in Krishna). You are Gourange i.e., of golden complexion. You are extremely magnanimous." How could Gaurasundar Who teaches the world to be devoid of vanity, to be ready to give due honour to others, how could the same Krishna-Chaitanya listen to the edification of Himself from the lips of Rupa Goswami?

'The onus of honouring this most shameless and basest of all base creatures, has been undertaken by no less a person than one who is endowed with a very high social status, a person of ripest experience, one of the very best of men. He undoubtedly possesses the highest excellence. But is there to be found one other such brute who will voluntarily listen to long-drawn eulogies of himself from this most

excellent person as he undoubtedly is? It is only a very bad man, a very great sinner, who can willingly listen to such praise of himself," - such would be the judgment of a finical and caustic observer.

We have taken upon ourselves the responsibility of welcoming this grave charge. All the audience have accepted ordinary seats, I alone have been provided with a lofty seat. All are being told in effect - "Do have a look at a big animal from the Zoo-gardens. What arrogance! So foolish! So wicked! Have you ever seen such a big brute? Garlands of flowers have been put round his neck! What laudations! What bombastic long-drawn and hyperbolic adjectives! And how complacently too he [sic] is listening to the praise of his own achievements, how intently, and with his own ears! He also evidently feels delighted in mind! Is he not acting in plain violation of the teaching of Mahaprabhu? Can such a big brute, so selfish and insolent, be ever reclaimed from brutishness?

I happen to be one of the greatest fools. No one offers me good advice on account of my arrogance. Inasmuch as nobody condescends to instruct me I placed my case before Mahaprabhu Himself. The thought occurred to me that I would make over the charge of myself to Him and see what He would advise me to do. Then Shri Chaitanyadeva said to me: Whom-so-ever thou meet'st, instruct him regarding Krishna,

By my command being Guru deliver this land; In this thou wilt not be obstructed by the current of the world; Thou wilt have My company once again at this place.

In these verses is to be found the proper explanation of the apparent inconsistency noticed above.

He whose only teaching is humility greater than that of a blade of grass, said - 'By My command being Guru save this land!' In this instance Mahaprabhu Himself given the command. His command being 'Perform the duty of the Guru, even as I do it Myself. Also convey this command to whom-so-ever you chance to meet'. Chaitanyadeva says, 'Tell them these very words viz. By My command being Guru save this land. Deliver the people from their foolishness'. Now who-so-ever happens to hear these words would naturally protest with palms joined - 'But I am really a

great sinner; how can I be Guru? You are Godhead Himself, the Teachers of the world. You can be Guru'. To this Mahaprabhu replies:

"In this thou wilt not be obstructed by the current of the world; Thou wilt have My company once again at this place.

Therefore, in his case there is no risk of forgetting Krishna. Whenever it is less than 180 degrees or 360 degrees the result is angularity. But on the level ground or at 360 degrees there is no angular vision. If God or things that are of God can be shown to be analogous to 360 degrees there would be no angular defects in such matters.

The thing called the world troubles us; colour, taste, smell, touch, sound dash themselves against us in mighty waves. For this reason it does not pay to be worldly-minded. Shri Chaitanyadeva said, 'Those who wish to get across the sea of worldliness, for such persons, who are intent on serving God and are free from desire for all other objects, the very sight of worldly people and of females is worse than the swallowing of poison.'

He who wants to be employed in the service of God should never cast a covetous eye on any worldly object. By the vision of the partial appearance of the external, physical world the vision of God is shut out. No sooner does the world, or in other words, anything perceptible by the senses, present itself, it at once causes forgetfulness of God; and all these persons who are connected with God look small. One who is moving forward on the path of devotion with the object of serving God should, therefore, by all means avoid the sight of worldly persons. Woman is the world and possessors of women are all worldly persons. Do not cast your eye on the associates of females or even on the companions of the associates of females. Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as a physician prescribes the following for us - 'Do not associate with those who are addicted to the world, to women, never do it. Mahaprabhu has declared: By my command being Guru save this land.

In this land of Bharat being born a man, Realising the significance of such birth, do good to others. Giving up malice be full of kindness for jivas.'

Do not practise the craft of a Guru for the purpose of injuring others through malice. Do not adopt the trade of a Guru in order to get immersed in the slough of this world. But if you can, indeed, be My guileless servant you will be endowed with My power - then you need not fear.”

I have no fear. My Gurudeva has heard this from his Gurudeva. And it is for this reason that my Gurudevas has accepted even such a great sinner as myself and has told me: ‘By My command being Guru save this land’. It is only those who have never heard these words of Gaursundar who say ‘How odd! To listen to one’s own praise!’ While the Guru is instructing his disciple in the eleventh Skandha of the Bhagavatam what a great sin, in their opinion, is he not perpetuating! What is the Acharya to do when he has to explain the Shloka ‘Acharya Mam Vijaniyat; Never disregard the Acharya; never entertain the idea that the Acharya is your equal in any sense.’ These are the words of Shri Krishna Himself by which the jiva is to be benefited. Is the Guru to take himself off, to desert his seat - the seat of the Acharya - from which these words are to be explained? That office his Gurudeva has conferred on him. If he does not act up to its requirements he is doomed to perdition by reason of his offense against the holy Name in the shape of disrespect towards the Guru. He has to do it in spite of the fact that such procedure is apparently open to the charge of egoism. When the Guru imparts the mantram to the disciple should he not tell him by this mantram to worship the Guru? Should he say instead, ‘Give the Guru a few strokes of the shoe or the horse-whip?’ The Guru is never to be decried. The Guru is the abode of all the gods. Should the Gurudeva abstain from communicating these words to his disciple while reading the Bhagavatam to him? ‘To him alone who possesses guileless spiritual devotion, similar to the transcendental devotion that is due to Krishna Himself, to the Gurudeva, the holy mysteries are manifested.’ Is the Gurudeva not to tell these things to his disciples? Athau Gurupuja’ the worship of the Guru has precedence over all others.’ The Guru is to be served just as Krishna is served. The Guru is to be worshipped in a particular way. Is the Guru to desert his seat without telling all these things to the disciple? In the angle there is always the defect in the shape of absence of the fullness, the evenness of level, of 180 degrees or of 360 degrees. But in the plain surrace [sic], in 360 degrees, there is no

such defect. That in the emancipated state no defect is possible, this simple truth ordinary foolish people entirely fail to grasp. It is as it were a hand is attached to the body of God Who is all-existence, all-intelligence, all-bliss. With His Hand god rubs His own feet. The hand of God is His own limb. In this case God is serving Himself. God Himself appears as the Guru in order to teach how to serve Himself. My Gurudeva is also in the same way one body with God. There is God Who is to be served, there is also God who serves - God as Object and God as support. Mukunda is God to be served, He is object-God. The best beloved of Mukunda - Shri Gurudeva - is serving-God, God the Support. There is no one so dearly loved by God as my Gurudeva. He alone is the best beloved of the Lord. Our Gurudeva has said - 'O my mind, whether it be religion that has been prescribed, or irreligion that has been forbidden, by the Vedas, you need perform neither. Placed as you are in this world propagate the unstinted service of Shri Radah-Krishna [sic] in Braja and recollect unceasingly the Darling Son of Shri Shachi, Shri Goursundar, knowing Him to be no different from the Son of Nanda, and the great Gurudeva, knowing him to be the best-beloved of Mukunda.' 'In the Gostha i.e., in Navadvipa-Vaikuntha-Svetadvipa-Vrindavana, never stint in your regard for the denizens of Navadvipa and Braja inasmuch as they are the Servitors of Gaur-Krishna. Do not condemn Brahmanas and Vaishnavas.'

For example, if having sat down to a meal, assuming gentle manners, we choose to take insufficient food, thereby the belly will not be filled. If we cheat the smith in the matter of steel, or, if not being able to understand how to do a sum in mathematics we feel ashamed of confessing our ignorance to the teacher, no success will be gained.

As the saying goes, 'having started on the dance it is no use to draw close the veil.' I am doing the duty of the Guru, but if I preach that no one should shout 'Jai' to me, that is to say, if I say in a round about way, 'sing Jai to me,' it would be nothing short of duplicity. Our Gurudeva has not taught us such insincerity. Mahaprabhu has not taught such insincerity. I have to serve God in the straightforward way. The word of God has come down to the Gurudeva; I have to obey it in all sincerity. I will not disrespect the Guru at the instance of any foolish or malicious sectarians.

Especially as Shri Gurudeva has directed me saying, 'By my command being Guru save this land.' This command has my Gurudeva preached. My Gurudeva in his turn has conveyed the command to me. I will not be guilty of any insincerity in carrying out that command. In this matter I will not accept the ideal of ignorant, insincere [sic], pseudo-ascetic sectarianism. I will not learn insincerity. The worldly-minded, the malicious, the pseudo-renunciators, the selfish cannot understand how the devotees of God, spurning at everything in this world by command of God, never, not even for a second, deviate from the service of God through all the twenty-four hours.

Hypocritical sectarians, pseudo-Vaishnava sects, those sects that cherish internally the longing for earthly fame, naturally enough think 'what a shame it is for one to listen to the eulogies of disciples occupying the seat of the Guru'. But every Vaishnava regards everyone of the Vaishnavas as the object of his veneration. When Thakur Haridas exhibits the attitude of humility Mahaprabhu says - 'You are the greatest of the world, the crest-jewel of the world. Be agreeable, let us have our meal together.' He carried in His arms the body of Thakur Haridas which is eternally existent, self-conscious and full of spiritual bliss. In the community that follows Shri Rupa, the qualities of desiring no honour for oneself and of readiness to duly honour others are fully present. Those who detect any disparity are, like the owl, blind while the sun shines. They commit an offence by such conduct.

If I disobey the law which has come down to me through the chain of preceptorial succession, the offence due to omission to carry out the command of the Guru will sever me from the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva. If in order to carry out the command of the Vaishnava guru I have to be arrogant, to be brutish, to suffer eternal perdition, I am prepared to welcome such eternal damnation and even sign a pact to that effect. I will not listen to the words of other malicious persons in lieu of the command of the Gurudeva. I will dissipate with indomitable courage and conviction the currents of thought of all the rest of the world, relying on the strength derived from the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva. I confess to this arrogance. By sprinkling a particle of the pollen of the lotus-feet of my Preceptor crores of people like you will be saved. There is no such learning in this

world, no such sound reasoning in all the fourteen worlds, in no man-gods, that can weight more than a solitary particle of the dust of the lotus-feet of my Gurudeva. Gurudeva in whom I have implicit trust can never spite me. I am by no means prepared to listen to the words of any one who wants to hurt me or to accept such a malicious person as my preceptor. This is what Shri Damodar Swarupa says in the presence of Shri Chaitanyaadeva, "Thou ocean of mercy, Shri Chaitanya, on the manifestation of Thy mercy the dust in the shape of mental disquietude is easily wafted away from the heart, and thereupon, the heart is cleaned of all impurities. Then is manifested, in the clean heart, the highest bliss born on devotion to Shri Krishna. The conflicting interpretations of the Shastras give use, in the mind, to opposing speculations which join in a perpetual strife. Only by obtaining Thy mercy the favoured heart is intoxicated with the elixir of the devotion to God whereupon the wranglings of the Shastras cease to disturb. Thy mercy promotes perennial devotion, or in other words, directs all jivas to their respective natural functions. Thy mercy, weaning jivas from hankering after objects other than Krishna, conducts them to the very pinnacle of beatitude. Thou ocean of kindness, Shri Chaitanya, may that non-evil-producing mercy of thine be poured down upon me."

When Shri Swarup Damodar speaks these words to Shri Chaitanaya-deva, Chaitanaya-deva does not avoid listening to him. Yet in order to teach humility to foolish people, He exhibits at times another line of conduct, observing, 'such words should not be addressed to Me', but not for the purpose of teaching daplicity [sic]. Ignorant people naturally entertain doubts. I have learnt from Shri Gurudeva that 'I am certainly as contemptible as the maggot bred in offal.' But when my Gurudeva, by command of his Guru, by command of Mahaprabhu, conducts himself in the aforesaid manner, may no one cast offence at his feet.

It is only when we have occasion to listen to the praises of the Supreme Object of all praises from the Master and they react on our hearts, that we may learn, about our utter worthlessness. Their profound humility and obedience teach us that it is never possible to approach God and His devotees except by such humble submission. If we learn to be arrogant, we would surely be [sic] deprived of the service of God and His devotees

for good. "There are persons who do not worship His devotees while worshipping God. Verily they are arrogant persons and not worshippers of God." In the matter of worship God and His devotees are to be equated. If the same devotion with which we worship God is not aroused in our hearts to the feet of His devotees, we are rendered perfectly worthless, and will have lived in vain.

I am extremely unfit and encompassed with all the evils. But an immense number of God's devotees have mercifully appeared for the good of one like me who is so completely engulfed in evil. Many of them have gathered at this place for subduing my irrepressible arrogance. All of them are instructing me about the highest service of God. May we be ever ready to sweep away from our hearts, by the rough application of hundreds of thousands of pointed broomsticks, the wicked design of desiring to be honoured above other persons by the devotees of God. God will be merciful to us and we shall be blessed with the gift of devotion to His Divine Feet the very day that we are delivered from the evil desire of seeking advantages and honours from others. A person is relieved from all ineligibilities by being imparted fitness for the service of God. Women, Shudras and the rest look condemnable and contemptible in the eyes of the world for their evil deeds. Even such persons are enabled to attain the eternal good by noting the model disposition of the devotees of God, who honour all persons without requiring to be honoured, and by following their conduct and teaching. Let us remember the text already quoted: "There are those who worship God but do not worship His devotees. Verily such persons are arrogant sinners. They are not worshippers of God."

If we become arrogant after having adopted the path of devotion, if we worship only God and disregard the worship of His devotees, we would be put to manifold difficulties for our offence at the feet of the servants of God; we would be overtaken by the greatest of all misfortunes by being afflicted with apathy for the principle of devotion itself.

Human life is meant solely for the attainment of the supreme good. Why do I forget it? Why do I forget that I am the meanest and least of all entities? The ambition to lord it over others, to be great, to be elevationist or salvationist, is brought about when we allow ourselves to fall victims to

the temptations of the deluding energy of God. Such ambition is petty and useless. If there is any use in curbing one's hankering after becoming great in the eyes of the world, if there is any use in gaining one's real health, it is imperative to accept the line of thought of the Vaishnavas. Those who are fit possess abundant power of devotion. They are strong. I should not apply myself to find out the shortcomings of the Vaishnavas, or to condemn the service of Lord Vishnu or to seek to establish my own point of view by neglecting the method by which I may be enabled to serve the Lord and His devotees. No language can describe the havoc that is wrought in human life by such arrogance. I make this submission with all humility, 'May you kindly refrain from merely limiting the conduct of the Vaishnavas. May you always follow their line of thought.' There is no relationship for us other than with the devotees of Vishnu. Relationship with other persons can only aggravate the desire for sensuous gratification.

Many a year has now passed over me one by one. I at last realize that there is no other help for me than the mercy of the holy feet of the Vaishnavas. Every one of my acts is fit to be attacked. I pray to those, who look down upon me, that if they consider that it is allowable for me to follow the conduct and the teachings of the Vaishnavas, they would no longer maintain that attitude. They will kindly impart to me the needful strength and fitness to communicate their power to those who are stupid and ignorant and devoid of all strength.

One who serves Lord Hari counts himself as the least of all entities. One is lifted to the highest order of the Vaishnavas when one can feel himself the least of all. One can then proclaim out the message of the highest devotion to Lord Hari.

"The best of all persons deems himself to be less than all others." Such is the great dictum.

It is necessary for the best to scrutinize one's intelligibility. Why should a person be anxious to pry into the defects of others when he does not seek to scrutinize his own conduct? Is this the disposition of the Vaishnava? On the other hand, even those who are low in the scale of service, may attain the higher level. Let us remember the texts:

“Not to speak of persons who listen to and remember with care the instructions of the spiritual scriptures, even those who live by sin, viz., women, Shudras, Hunas, Savaras and the birds of the air, can know God and prevail over His deluding power if they follow the conduct of the devoted servants of the Lord who covers all the worlds by His wonderful strides.”

‘The acts and expressions of the Vaishnavas cannot be understood even by the wise.’ The devotees are attached to the Lord Who pervades the worlds with His wonderful strides. Let us not be misled by the apparent sight. Many a person has been liable to mistake the pebble for the pearl, the snake for the rope, evil for good, by falling a victim to delusion by relying on apparent sight. It is only when a person allows himself to fall into the clutches of self-delusion that one’s senses show their eagerness for supplying the wants incidental to the phenomenal world by supposing himself to be an inhabitant of the same. We should consider well how we are to be delivered from being thus exploited by the deluding energy. It will never bring us relief if we adopt the lordly mentality for supplying our present inadequacies and for avoiding what certain hasty observers have been pleased to dub as ‘the slave mentality’ of the devotees of God. Such modes of thinking accelerate our march towards the inferno by plunging us into the course of sensuous indulgences. If we disregard or ignore the devotees of God for elevating ourselves, we would thereby be cast into the prison of three dimensions and spring towards inflation instead of contraction. “I will be good; I will be cured of my mundane desires; I will have real well-being”; this is the proper kind of judgment. But it is not at all laudable to entertain the contrary thoughts: ‘I will be great, I will gratify my malice by stopping the course of the whole world.’ It is by no means proper to set up one’s superiority against the worshipfulness of God’s devotees. The path of hearkening to the Transcendental Word has been rendered devious by the misinterpretation of the text ‘Aham Brahmasmi.’ I have listened to the true interpretation of the text at the lotus-feet of my Divine Master. It is to this effect, “It is our eternal duty to chant constantly the Name of Hari by being infinitely more truly humble than the smallest blade of grass, more truly forbearing than even the proverbially patient tree, and to honour others without seeking honour.”

What persuasive courtesy, what humility do these words express! How great is the benefit, how great the good that we may have by listening to such words! We have it from the Talaba Upanishad that those who aspire to be masters of the devotees, who are the masters of God Himself, are indeed, most culpably arrogant. Shrimad Bhagavatam significantly declares, 'Let those who profess to know God brag of their knowledge, but let me have nothing to do with such fellows. This is all I have got to say in this matter.'

Not one among the paths of this material world is a path of the service of the Divinity. The idea that one should be master of God's devotees leads to inferno. It is harmful to follow any worldly path. To follow the devotees of God is the only path that leads to one's real good. Whatever method is followed by the devotees is worthy of being cherished with the utmost love and reverence.

Holding the blade of straw between my teeth I pray time and again for this only boon, that I may be a particle of dust of the lotus-feet of the most revered Shri Rupa Goswami Prabhu. Let there be birth after birth for us that we may walk in the path of the followers of shri Rupa by being the particles of dust on the lotus-feet of the devotees of God. The root of it all is humility or the due realization of one's own ineligibility. If the conviction of our unfitness for the service of God is revealed to us either automatically or by the instruction of other persons, we are only then in a position to appreciate the beauty of the lotus-feet of God's devotees. In all the talks of the average people of this world the idea that is uppermost is how to promote the gratification of one's senses. If we happen to be obsessed with the idea that it is the path of religion, we would be prevented for good from becoming truly religious.

All persons are accustomed to worship the Beautiful Feet of God. But the conception that God is to supply our comforts and conveniences in lieu of worship is worthy of a shop-keeper. That we are to receive some other things in exchange for our worship is not the trend of thought of the devotees of God. If one seeks to follow such a course, one will never understand the nature of the service of Krishna. God is full of the highest well-being. It is no proof of one's goodness of judgment to pray to God for the gratification of one's senses instead of the highest good. It should be

the duty of all persons to follow the line of thought that seeks to find out how Krishna is to be served.

Oh my Lord, I pray to Thee for being employed in Thy service. I will no more serve dogs and horses, iron and gold, men and gods. I have courted my own destruction by engaging in their service. Thy service, O Lord, is the only means of being delivered from this dire misfortune. But it is a far cry to seek to obtain Thy service without serving those who have dedicated themselves to Thy service. The service of Thy devotees is productive of greater good than any other method.

We do not find God in this world. The devotees, who serve God, out of their mercy show themselves to us. We should follow their conduct and teaching. It is the only path to our well-being. Due to our meager education and small experience, to most of us the ideas and ways of thinking of the devotees of God appear to be unedifying 'slave mentality'. Let us not indulge in such profane ravings under the urge of mental aberration. On the contrary, our line of thought should be, "Let the censorious people calumniate us to their hearts' content. We will not mind them. Let us roll in the dust and forget everything in the ecstasy of intoxication by excessive drinking of the strong and tasty wine of the love of Lord Hari."

FOOTNOTES

[1] C.C.M. 18/116.

[2] Bh. 1.7.7.

[3] Padvalia 127.

[4] Bh. 1.7.4-5

[5] Mundak Up. 3/1/3.

[6] Bh. X.2.32.

[7] Bh. X.14.3.

[8] Bh. X.14.4.

[9] Bh. X.14.8.

[10] Bh. II.1.11.